

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance the case to issue without delay.

Claims 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The claims were identified as means-plus-function limited claims. The specification/written description was said to fail in clearly linking or associating the disclosed structure, material or acts to the claimed function such that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize what structure, material or act perform the claimed function.

Applicant has amended the claims to remove means-plus-function language. The amendment to the claims was not necessitated by the prior art but merely to remove the informality of the means-plus-function language.

Claims 6-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Hovland et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,169,914). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Anticipation requires that all elements of a claim be found in a single prior art reference. Contrary to Hovland, Applicant's new independent Claim 11 has multiple features not found in the reference.

Claim 11 requires a first tube and a second tube at the local station, the tubes communicating with one another through a pneumatic fluid. These features are not shown in the reference. Further, Claim 11 requires a piston in the second tube. This is absent from the reference. Still further, Claim 11 requires a motor at the remote station. This is absent from the reference. Still further, Claim 11 requires a thrusting tube positioned inside a steadying tube. The reference fails to show this combination. Neither does the

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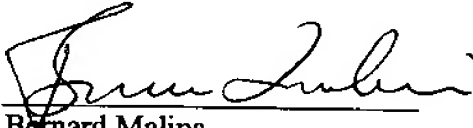
reference disclose the motor energizing movement of the thrusting tube. The reference is not motorized but requires human power as input. For all these reasons, Hovland et al. would not anticipate the claims.

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant requests the Examiner to reconsider the rejection and now allow the claims.

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Respectfully submitted,

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